

Preventing Foodborne Illness

Consultation and Technical Assistance for Day Care Home Providers

- Bacteria can live on hands. Be sure and wash hands for at least 20 seconds, with soap and hot running water, before preparing food, serving food, and eating food. Dry hands using fresh paper towels.
- Always thaw food in cold water or the refrigerator. You can use a microwave to defrost if you are cooking the food immediately. If you thaw food on the counter, bacteria will be growing on the outer layers before the center has finished thawing.
- Wash the skin of all produce before preparing and eating.
- Unpasteurized juice and cider may contain harmful bacteria. Look for juice that has gone through the pasteurization process to eliminate harmful bacteria.
- Avoid cross-contamination from raw eggs, meat, poultry, and fish to other raw or cooked foods by thoroughly washing cutting boards, utensils, and hands, and by discarding used packaging.
 1. Prepare a stock of bleach solution by adding 1 Tablespoon liquid chlorine bleach to gallon warm water. Store in a locked cabinet or closet, or well out of children's reach.
 2. For easy use, clearly label and fill an opaque plastic spray bottle with the solution. Clear plastic bottles that let the light through, and/or heat will cause the solution to break down, and the bleach will lose its effectiveness.
 3. Spray surfaces with solution, and air-dry or pat dry with fresh paper towels.
 4. To reduce the risk of harm, keep the spray bottle out of children's reach, do not use the bleach solution when children are in the area, and make sure surfaces are dry before children go near them.
- An anti-bacterial kitchen cleaner that has been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency as a safe way to kill bacteria can also be used for cleaning surfaces. Once cutting boards develop hard-to-clean grooves, discard them.
- Use disposable paper towels to wipe up spills. If you use a sponge in the kitchen, microwave it on high for at least 30 seconds after each use, and wash it in the dishwasher often to kill harmful bacteria.

- Wash and disinfect knives, can openers, and kitchen scissors after each use and wash the lids of canned foods before opening.
- Cook foods thoroughly. Keep foods hot or refrigerate or freeze within two hours of preparation (one hour in the summer).
- When it is time to serve the meal, do not use dishes or utensils that you have used to prepare the food.
- Do not eat any uncooked batter that contains raw eggs.
- Make sure your refrigerator is 40°F or below, and your freezer is 0°F or below.
- If you have a lot of leftovers, divide portions into small shallow containers for quick and safe cooling in the refrigerator. Cold air must always circulate in the refrigerator, so do not overcrowd foods within it.

*Developed by the Division of Child Day Care Licensing, Michigan Department of Consumer and Industry Services. Based on information presented in Kent Regional 4-C's February, 1998 Newsletter and the Association for Child Development's March 1998 Potpourri Newsletter.